

**Tennessee
Emergency
Management Agency**

Memo

To: All Agencies/Organizations Responding to Animal-Related Disasters in Tennessee

From: Gen. Jim Bassham, Director, Tennessee Emergency Management Agency *Jim Bassham*

Ken Givens, Commissioner, Tennessee Department of Agriculture *Ken Givens*

CC: TEMA Emergency Support Coordinators, United States Department of Agriculture

Date: January 25, 2006

Re: Animal Disaster Deployment into Tennessee

The Tennessee Emergency Management Agency contributed to the Hurricane Katrina response in Louisiana and Mississippi through the deployment of emergency response personnel utilizing the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) while also assisting with the care and housing of evacuees. Many personnel were deployed through EMAC, and approximately 20,000 evacuees were airlifted to the Tri-Cities, Chattanooga, Knoxville, Smyrna and Nashville airports. It is estimated that at least as many self-evacuated to Tennessee and stayed with friends, relatives or at commercial motels. Some of these evacuees eventually depleted their personal resources and were cared for at Red Cross shelters. Approximately 500 companion animals were triaged and vaccinated at the airports. All pets accompanying their owners were provided housing and care near Red Cross shelters so that the animal and owner could accompany each other through the experience. Unaccounted for are a large number of pets accompanying the people traveling on their own and a large number of horses that were stabled at private farms.

The TEMA Katrina *After Action Report* (AAR) identified a few weaknesses in the Tennessee Emergency Management Plan (TEMP). As a result of identified deficiencies in the TEMP, Tennessee Governor Phil Bredesen directed TEMA to update all of the Emergency Support Functions (ESF) response guides to better prepare for future disasters in Tennessee. These are known as the *Disaster Operations Guides* (DOGS).

The specific problem of self deployment was an identified major breakdown. Since self deployment of individuals from all of the emergency disciplines was a large and disruptive force in the Katrina response which contributed to chaos and inappropriate use of personnel and resources, this is specifically addressed in the ESF 16, Animal Care and Housing, DOG. Under EMAC, the state will issue a call for help and delineate the specific teams, resources, and assistance needed so that EMAC can re-direct the request to the member states most capable to affect the response. The updated guide affirms that no person will be deployed into the State of Tennessee unless a specific request is made through EMAC. Likewise, requests for help from within the state must be coordinated through the state emergency management agency and TEMA is the conduit to the EMAC. In order to identify the persons coming into

Tennessee to provide assistance, all will be required to have credentials indicating that they are trained in their specific areas and have completed the Incident Command System (ICS) courses 100, 200 and NIMS, IS-700. The Tennessee Department of Agriculture has nearly 650 people trained and credentialed to work in animal related emergencies and regularly conducts credentialing courses. Since the management of disasters response as adopted by TEMA functions under the ICS and NIMS, it is expected that all personnel deployed into Tennessee will understand and work under these management systems. Since self deployed individuals who are not credentialed and have unverified knowledge of ICS and NIMS and would not be afforded the protections, guidance and sanctions provided by EMAC and the laws of the State of Tennessee, self deployment can not be tolerated.

If you have questions on this memo or Tennessee's credentialing program, please contact:

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